

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 6 and 13 and amend claims 1, 9 and 14 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An embedment device for use in a structural panel production line wherein a slurry is transported on a moving carrier relative to a support frame, and chopped fibers are deposited upon the slurry, said device comprising:

a first ~~integrally formed~~ elongate shaft secured to the support frame and having a first plurality of axially spaced disks axially fixed to said first shaft;

a second ~~integrally formed~~ elongate shaft secured to the support frame and having a second plurality of axially spaced disks axially fixed to said second shaft;

said first shaft being disposed relative to said second shaft to be horizontally aligned and so that said disks intermesh with each other, and wherein, when viewed from the side, peripheries of said first and second pluralities of disks overlap each other.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The device of claim 1 wherein said shafts are oriented on the frame to be generally transverse to the direction of movement of the slurry along the production line.

4. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 3 wherein said shafts are oriented on the frame to be generally parallel to each other and define a plane vertically displaced from and parallel to said moving carrier.

5. (Original) The device of claim 4 wherein each said shaft includes relatively smaller diameter spacer disks between each adjacent pair of said first and second pluralities of disks, and peripheries of said first and second pluralities of disks are in close proximity to corresponding peripheries of said opposed spacer disks.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The device of claim 1 wherein said first plurality of disks are disposed relative to the frame to create a first trough pattern in the slurry for embedding the fibers therein, and said second plurality of disks are disposed relative to the frame to create a second trough pattern in the slurry, said second pattern being transversely offset from said first pattern.

8. (Original) The device of claim 1 wherein said shafts are configured to rotate in the same direction.

9. (Currently Amended) An embedment device for use in embedding fibers into a settable slurry used in producing a structural board on a board production line including a support frame, said device comprising:

    a first elongate support shaft secured to the frame and having a first plurality of relatively large diameter disks ~~stacked axially along~~ fixed to said shaft in between a first plurality of relatively small diameter disks;

    a second elongate support shaft secured to the frame and having a second plurality of relatively large diameter disks ~~stacked axially along~~ fixed to said shaft in between a first plurality of relatively small diameter disks;

    said first and second support shafts positioned relative to each other to be horizontally aligned and so that said first plurality of relatively large diameter disks are intermeshed with said second plurality of relatively large diameter disks, said intermeshed relationship creating a close, yet relatively rotational tolerance between adjacent disks of said opposing first and second support shafts for self cleaning;

    peripheries of said first and second intermeshed pluralities of relatively large diameter disks overlap each other and are in close proximity to corresponding peripheries of said opposed relatively small diameter disks;

    said shafts being oriented on the frame to be generally parallel to each other and to define a plane vertically displaced from and parallel to a moving carrier on said frame;

said first and second pluralities of relatively large diameter disks being uniformly shaped; and

    said first and second pluralities of relatively small diameter disks being uniformly shaped.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Original) The device of claim 9 wherein each said large diameter disk and said small diameter disks have a thickness, and said thicknesses of said large diameter disks and said small diameter disks are approximately the same.

12. (Original) The device of claim 9 wherein said shafts are oriented on the frame to be generally transverse to the direction of movement of the slurry along the production line and are generally parallel to each other.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) An embedment device for use in embedding fibers into a settable slurry used in producing a structural board on a board production line including a support frame, said device comprising:

a first integrally formed elongate support shaft secured to the frame and having a first plurality of relatively large diameter axially aligned and axially fixed disks stacked axially along said shaft in between a first plurality of relatively small diameter axially aligned and axially fixed disks;

a second integrally formed elongate support shaft secured to the frame and having a second plurality of relatively large diameter axially aligned and axially fixed disks stacked axially along said shaft in between a first plurality of relatively small diameter axially aligned and axially fixed disks;

said first and second support shafts positioned relative to each other to be horizontally aligned and so that said first plurality of relatively large diameter disks are intermeshed with said second plurality of relatively large diameter disks, said intermeshed relationship creating a close, yet relatively rotational tolerance between adjacent disks of said opposing first and second support shafts for self cleaning;

each of said first plurality of relatively large diameter disks overlapping a corresponding one of said second plurality of relatively large diameter disks approximately the length of a radius of said large diameter disks;

peripheries of said first and second pluralities of relatively large diameter disks being in close proximity to corresponding peripheries of said opposed relatively small diameter disks for preventing said slurry from becoming caught between said relatively large diameter disks and said relatively small diameter disks;

said shafts being oriented on the frame to be generally parallel to each other and to define a plane vertically displaced from and parallel to said board production line;

    said first plurality of relatively large diameter disks being disposed relative to the frame to create a first trough pattern in the slurry for embedding the fibers therein, and said second plurality of relatively large diameter disks being disposed relative to the frame to create a second trough pattern in the slurry, said second trough pattern being transversely offset from said first pattern; and

    said first and second shafts, and said associated disks, rotate in the same direction.